

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 096755

MO.: 11652

TAGS: PFOR/PN

SUBJ: TEMPORARY VISITOR VISAS FOR DEPENDENTS ASSIGNED TO
CANAL ZONE

JOINT STATE-DEFENSE MESSAGE

1. IN EFFORT TO FACILITATE ISSUANCE OF PANAMANIAN
TEMPORARY VISITOR VISAS TO US DEPENDENTS ASSIGNED TO THE
CANAL ZONE, STATE AND DOD REPRESENTATIVES DISCUSSED MATTER
APRIL 10 WITH PANAMANIAN EMBASSY OFFICERS. US SIDE PRE-
SENTED FOLLOWING PROPOSAL DESIGNED TO SIMPLIFY CURRENT
REQUIREMENTS:

A. UPON RECEIPT OF THE PASSPORT AND DD FORM 1056
FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE INDICATING THAT THE DEPENDENTS
WILL RESIDE IN THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA, THE US MILITARY
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PASSPORT OFFICES WILL PREPARE AND SIGN THE SPECIAL VISA

APPLICATION AND OBTAIN AUTHENTICATION FEE AND POLICE
VERIFICATION CERTIFICATE FROM SPONSORS/DEPENDENTS.

B. THE MILITARY PASSPORT OFFICE WILL FORWARD THE
SPECIAL VISA APPLICATION, FEE AND US PASSPORT UNDER A
COVERING LETTER TO THE PANAMANIAN EMBASSY, WASHINGTON, D.C.

C. THE PANAMANIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON WOULD BE
EMPOWERED TO ISSUE THE VISAS ON ITS OWN AUTHORITY.

D. IF EMBASSY APPROVAL IS GRANTED, THE VISA STAMP
WOULD BE AFFIXED BY THE EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, D.C. AND
THE PASSPORT THEN RETURNED TO THE APPROPRIATE MILITARY
PASSPORT OFFICE FOR TRANSMITTAL TO THE RESPONSIBLE
INSTALLATION.

AS IS THE PRACTICE WITH DEPENDENTS ASSIGNED TO THE
PHILIPPINES, THE PROPOSED SPECIAL VISA FORM MENTIONED
IN 1.A. ABOVE WOULD PROVIDE FOR THE US MILITARY PASSPORT
OFFICE TO SIGN THE VISA APPLICATION ON BEHALF OF THE
DEPENDENT.

2. PANAMANIAN EMBASSY OFFICERS ACCEPTED THE PROPOSALS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS AND SAID THEY WOULD FORWARD THEM TO
PANAMA FOR CONSIDERATION. HOWEVER, PANAMANIAN POINTED
OUT THAT THE WASHINGTON EMBASSY HAS NEVER ISSUED A
TEMPORARY VISITOR VISA, AND EMBASSY DOES NOT HAVE THE
STAFF OR FACILITIES TO COPE WITH HANDLING A LARGE NUMBER
OF SUCH VISA APPLICATIONS. PANAMANIAN ALSO POINTED OUT
THAT FORMAL REQUIREMENTS FOR TEMPORARY VISITOR VISA ARE
SET FORTH IN 1965 DECREE, WHICH WOULD REQUIRE REVISION
IN LEGISLATION TO ACCOMMODATE US PROPOSED CHANGES. THESE
VISA REQUIREMENTS ARE NOT MERELY ADMINISTRATIVE REGULA-
TIONS. IN CONCLUSION, THE EMBASSY RECOMMENDED THAT
DEPENDENTS CONTINUE, AS AT PRESENT, TO OBTAIN A TOURIST
VISA PRIOR TO ARRIVAL AND TO APPLY FOR THEIR TEMPORARY
VISITOR VISAS AFTER ARRIVAL IN PANAMA.

3. SUBSEQUENTLY, PANAMANIAN EMBASSY RAISED THIS QUESTION
WITH FOREIGN MINISTER TACK DURING LATTER'S VISIT TO
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WASHINGTON APRIL 22-26. TACK CONFIRMED THAT PRESENT
SYSTEM COULD NOT BE CHANGED WITHOUT NEW LEGISLATION,
A STEP WHICH HE DOES NOT FAVOR. TACK PREFERS THE PRESENT
SYSTEM WHEREBY DEPENDENTS CHANGE THEIR STATUS AFTER
ARRIVAL IN PANAMA.

4. IN VIEW OF FOREGOING, REQUEST VIEWS OF ACTION ADDRESSEE
CONCERNING THE POSSIBILITY OF PERSUADING GOP TO CHANGE ITS

LAWS AND PROCEDURES TO PERMIT ISSUANCE OF TEMPORARY
VISITOR VISAS BY ITS WASHINGTON EMBASSY AS OUTLINED IN
PARA 1 ABOVE. IF THIS SHOULD NOT PROVE FEASIBLE, WE MIGHT
CONSIDER REQUESTING WRITTEN PANAMANIAN STATEMENT CONFIRMING

ITS PREFERENCE THAT SUCH VISAS BE OBTAINED FOR COMMAND-
SPONSORED DEPENDENTS ASSIGNED TO PANAMA AFTER THEIR
ARRIVAL IN PANAMA AND FOR NOMINAL FEE AS OPPOSED TO
50 DOLLAR CHANGE OF STATUS FEE.

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